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ABSTRACT

The paper develops a conceptual framework for teacher leadership and empirically verifies the existence of teacher leadership skills through a survey of 170 teachers. The model of transformational leadership, based on several leadership theories, is presented to advance increased teacher participation in instructional leadership. The model includes three major elements: potential or informal leadership, conflict or problem issues, and articulation and empowerment of solutions. The elements provide a format for analyzing issues in leadership as they apply to teachers and the process of instructional leadership. Formal and informal leadership are exercised by both principals and teachers; conflict of some kind is necessary for the emergence of effective leadership; and people must have common issues which need resolution. Essential to the leadership-empowerment cycle is having more than one leader. Though there may be one designated leader, there are other informal leaders. An ethical response to conflict is necessary in the leadership-empowerment cycle, with the leader responding in terms of group ethics and values. Implications for further study include the need to discover teacher leadership skills in a broadly based sampling of teachers who are mentors, members of school leadership or site-based management committees, more experienced teachers, teacher trainers, administrative interns, department chairpersons, specialized subject area teachers, and band and athletics directors. (SM)

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A MODEL OF TEACHER LEADERSHIP

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Purpose:

The purpose of this paper is to develop a conceptual framework for teacher leadership and to empirically verify the existence of teacher leadership skills involved in schools. The following conceptual framework of teaching is based upon several theories of leadership. The conceptual framework of teacher leadership is validated in a study of 170 teachers using a questionnaire developed in another paper related to this investigation (Strodl and Lynch, 1992). The implications of this framework will be to develop relationships among instructional leaders, to authenticate teacher leadership skills, to encourage participation in instructional leadership activities such as shared decision-making and site-based management, and to contribute toward the professionalization of career teachers.

Analyzing the work of teachers in terms of leadership inquiry and skills we empower the ability of teachers to go beyond the technical side of teaching to facilitate students in their quest to incrementally achieve fulfillment of aspirations and potentialities. Increasingly, we understand that teaching cannot be conducted out of a cookbook. Standard prescriptions on teaching methods are good enough to get started, but are not enough to carry a teacher through a highly developed and satisfying professional career in complex social situations.

Burns' construct of Transformational Leadership aids conceptualization of teacher leadership roles leading up to formal appointments as school administrators. A model of teacher

leadership will be developed to advance increased teacher participation in the instructional leadership of schools. Included in the model will be the applications of instructional leadership for teachers and school administrators. Applications of teacher leadership are investigated in a questionnaire as teacher leadership skills in a related study (Strodl and Lynch, 1992).

Rationale:

As part of their interpersonal rapport with students teachers use many leadership skills in accomplishing their work. Having defined leadership in terms of teacher roles, teachers may be able to sustain more powerful influence and rapport with students and provide positive roles for them more often. Increasingly professionalized teachers may contribute to the overall interpersonal structure of school culture and instructional leadership within schools. In establishing interpersonal rapport with students it is important to define leadership and apply it to teaching. (Hersey and Blanchard, 1982, pp. 165-68; Burns, 1978, pp. 39-45, 297-303; Deal, 1982).

Leadership Defined in Terms of Teaching:

Leadership is the influence a person asserts upon the behavior of others. Leadership is the quality of a person to motivate people to change individual behavior to cooperative group behavior and to give direction and purpose to the lives of other people. Interpersonal competence is related to leadership through

empathy, insightk, heightened awareness and the ability to interact with others. Successful leaders are open in discussions of feelings, developing group solutions to conlfict and developing commitment to actions. Successful leaders depend on trust and shared decision making, rather than on power. Instead, power results from the quality of dialoguem active soliciting ofideas and continuously searching for new infomration. Power in leadership comes out of the quality of group interaction and the leaders persuasion of group members that their ideas were valuable and enlisting support from group members. Trustworthiness and credibility characteristically camout out of careful listening, informal two way conversations. Information tended to depende upon being a careful communicator using frank two-way communications. (Bennis, 1985; Hersey and Blanchard, 1982; Burns, 1978; Gardner, 1990; Bass, 1991, pp. 11, 110-18, 339-50).

Throughout the literature of leadership teachers are mentioned as examples of leadership. "Teaching and leading are indistinguishable occupations, but every great leader is teaching and every great teacher is leading" (Gardner, 1990, p. 18). In understanding the relationship of leader and follower Burns (1978), Gardner (1990) and Bennis (1985) all speak of teachers as leaders. "The search for...this kind of full sharing, feeling relationship -- between 'teachers' and 'students,' between leaders and followers must be more than a self-regarding quest." (Burns, p. 448). Bennis states that teaching and leading are much the same thing, with the leader providing the stimulus for learning,

where teachers are leaders and students are followers (pp. 209, 39).

Conflict is an essential aspect of leadership. Conflict may be defined as a problem, issue or organizational hurdle to be overcome. Conflict is the focal point of leadership acts. The leader focuses behavioral energy with followers empowering them to become more than they were before. As leaders galvanize followers around conflict the leader motivates followers using group ethics; cultural standards and personal sensitivity in communications to bring people together around common concerns and issues. Thus defined, the elusive magic of teaching has elements which can be developed in its interpersonal sense. If teaching can be understood and developed in terms of leadership teaching can be explained in terms of its power to change lives. (Bennis, 1985; Hersey and Blanchard, 1982; Burns, 1978; Gardner, 1990; Bass, 1990; Deal, 1982). Ultimately teacher leadership involves "coalescing others to act when otherwise they might not have." (Howey, 1988, p. 297).

Leaders cannot be leaders in isolation. Leaders engage in two-way communications. In this interactive process leaders modify and are modified. Within schools the social and cultural pressure of some administrators' endeavors are influenced by similar initiatives of faculty. Responses and initiatives of some teachers may assert pressure for change and action, or the formation of policies. More accomplished teachers may influence the decision-making of the principal. Often teachers roles and activities change the direction of curriculum articulation, the

culture of the school, the shared goals of the school, and the cooperation among peers, parents, community members. (Gardner, 1990, p. 1-11; Deal, 1982; Freeston, 1987; Pitner, 1986; Johnson, 1990).

Multiple Leaders in Schools:

It is a mistake to assume that leadership is exclusively a managerial function. Bennis makes the distinction, "Mangers do things right. Leaders do the right thing." (1985, p.5) To restrict leadership to the principals office is to assume that teachers never deal with conflict on their own, never inspire students to higher levels of accomplishment, never respond to school-wide policy issues, or never influence the formation of collective opinions, never contribute to the configuration of school climate and culture. Leadership has both formal and informal dimensions. Participants , followers, and leaders all have essential roles to play in group processes (Blau and Meyer, 1976; Bass, 1991, Ch. 18).

The non-managerial dimensions of school leadership must be considered in the dynamic influences involved in schools and the communities surrounding them. Teacher contributions to the matrix of leadership influences included in decision making, consensus formation, conflict reduction and group interaction (Burns, 1978).

Leadership is not new to teachers. Teachers have assumed leadership positions as union leaders, department chairs, members of advisory committees, curriculum committees. Teachers have been mentors to other teachers. They have been master teachers.

Teachers often have an outstanding sense of community responsibility; fulfilling roles as scout leaders, little league leaders, choir directors, Sunday school leaders, local political group leaders, and environmental group leaders.

Teachers have been formal and informal leaders of all kinds. They have dealt with ethical values and contributed their share and inspired participation by others. Teachers contribute to the leadership of the school through coaching beginning teachers, contributing to the articulation and development of curriculum, identifying problems and solutions, improving home-school relationships, and coordinating the delivery of instruction to pupils (Howey, 1988).

Teachers fulfill leadership roles as facilitators, promoters, ombudsmen, and catalysts for individual teacher improvements. Teachers provide emotional support for other teachers. Teachers depict themselves as instrumental for developing new concepts for other teachers. Teachers are involved in many leadership activities including program-related meetings, school district and building level decision-making, curriculum development and instructional initiatives. (Smylie and Denny, 1990).

The real power of teachers is not in their formal authority. The real power of teachers is in their informal power as leaders who contribute to the dynamics of adjustment and change in schools. Teachers have the power to nurture and cognitive and affective growth. Teachers have the power to stimulate academic participation to glimpse the larger world, to help students deal

with immediate problems and conflicts . Teachers are role models and can inspire change in a young person's life.

Teachers influence one another in ways that principals and school administrators cannot. Bureaucratic relations are confined to business communications downward decision making, impersonal relations often non-existent upward communications. Often teachers decide to resist administrative initiatives and top down regulations and rule making. Efforts at improving schools can be nullified when teachers close classroom doors (Smyllie and Denny, 1990; Freeston, 1987; Johnson, 1990) If teachers can close the classroom door and ignore an authoritarian policy, policies cannot be simply proclaimed by fiat, without faculty consultation. An assertive teacher can object to *ce4*rtain supervisory procedures and effectively change policies within dialogue with the principal (Johnson, 1990).

Teachers influence school principals by giving them opinions and information of all kinds. Often teachers go to the principal to relay staff concerns. Teachers pass along concerns expressed by community members and parents. Teachers recommend instructional materials, suggest topics for faculty meetings, raise concerns about disciplinary issues and they recommend solutions to these problems. The concept of informal bureaucracy leads us to understand that teachers operate as professional people making significant contributions to the overall leadership and direction of the school and the development of its formal policies and informal culture. Having articulated the work of teachers as leaders permits us to perceive an added dimension to

contribute toward constructive teacher functioning and productivity. (Blau and Meyer, pp. 58-59).

Teachers facilitate the complex dynamics of pedagogical interaction by motivating, communicating and nurturing the psychosocial growth of students. They lead students toward the larger world of social cooperation, community values, universal knowledge (Hall and Hall, 1988; Koestenbaum, 1991, pp. 42-43).

Included in the teaching process, teachers work with students on a situational leadership basis, leading students in terms of the relationship an complexity of the task. Immature students require differing teaching posturing from more mature students. Complex subject matter may require more direct instructional supervision than less complex content. Having established more successful rapport with students, the teachers' style changes to incorporate more trust in the amount of independence fostered in the teacher-pupil relationship. (Hersey and Blanchard, 1982, pp. 165-67).

Insofar as there are numerous examples of teacher leadership, it is appropriate that a theoretical model of teacher leadership be developed. The theoretical basis for this model could be situational leadership, or leader behavior, or other leadership theories. Burns (1978) developed Transformational Leadership which is probably an appropriate theoretical basis for developing teacher leadership because we can account for formal and informal leadership and related socio-psychological differences in leadership skills and authority issues.

A Conceptual Framework for Teacher Leadership

The model of Transformational Leadership (figure 1) includes three major elements discussed by Burns (1978): (1) potential or informal leadership, (2) conflict or problem issues, and (3) articulation and empowerment of solutions. While these three major elements may over simplify Burns' Transformational Leadership they provide a format for analyzing issues in leadership as they apply to teacher and the process of instructional leadership.

Formal and informal leadership are a part of leadership for all holders of authority positions, including both principals and teachers. The basis of formal leadership is within the rules provided by the formal organization. The basis of informal leadership is in the relationship of individuals, groups and the motivational personality of the leader. In organizations there are formal and informal leaders, active participants and alienated non-participants (Bass, 1991, pp. 1000+).

One cannot assume that because a person is a school administrator that one is automatically a leader, indeed bureaucracy can get in the way. Similarly, one cannot assume that because teachers are lower down on the organizational charts that they are not leaders. To the extent there is a relationship of leader and follower dealing with important issues, this exemplifies leadership. (Burns, 1978, p. 297-98).

In both situations the basis of conflicts may be similar, but the response of the leader varies. The formal leader responds to

conflict with rules making the application of power and authority provided by the bureaucracy. In informal leadership the basis of power is that the leader is a group member dealing with group concerns, articulating group needs, galvanizing people together by applying an ethical response to a group problem. (Burns, pp. 39-45, 297-303).

Transformational Leadership changes the lives of organizations, nations and people. Critical to the success of the informal leader is the leader's ability to empower followers. As a person who empowers others the informal leader connects with followers in terms of conflicts, problems and issues to enable followers to become successful.

The model in figure one applies to leadership situations of all kinds. Informal leadership exists for all kinds of school administrators. But, the model is particularly important for teacher leadership. Within the model the complexity and interaction of leaders and followers, leaders and participants, conflict and solution development are integrated into a whole which permits interaction and reciprocal influences. (Burns, pp. 29-38)

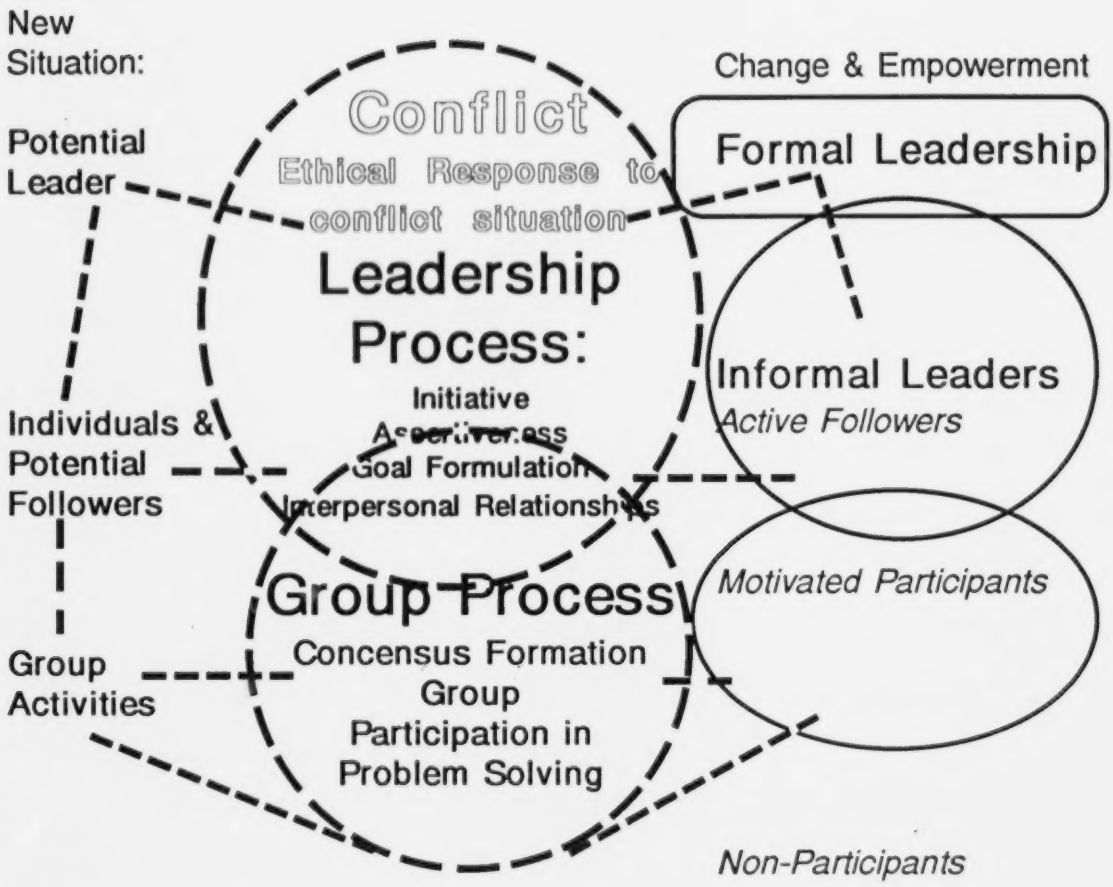
insert

figure one here

The Leadership Empowerment Cycle:

Conflict of some kind is an necessity for the emergence of effective leadership. In order for people to come together there

fig. 1: Leadership Empowerment Cycle



must be common issues and problems which need resolution based on common needs. As the situation develops there is the need to people to adjust group perceptions and motivate joint behaviors. Among group members there are individuals who communicate better than others, who seem to have the unusual competence and the power to overcome conflicts and solve problems. These individuals represent values and ideas respected by the group members and are influential in interpreting events, issues, problems and the resources for dealing with them. (Burns, pp. 39-74).

Multiple leaders in group empowerment:

Another essential ingredient to the leadership empowerment cycle is that there is more than one leader. In bureaucratic settings there is one designated leader in a given situation, but there are other informal leaders who form part of an entire matrix of pushes and pulls in the formation of opinion and group consciousness.

Active participants and emerging leaders become involved informally to crystallize group consciousness. Followers are empowered to become more than they were before by joining in with the group process. The active participant-follower is an outstanding participant. A superb follower and group leader who helps the leader to be sensitive to group needs and issues, is the representative of a smaller constituency within the organization. The active participant, perhaps the most actively involved participant is developing as an emerging leader. This emerging leader is discovering leadership abilities and is likely being

mentored by the formal leader. This active participant is at the focal point of the constituency within the organization or school. By working with several participants the leader is able to connect more closely with the larger group, to unify constituencies, focus energies of many individuals, and to be sensitive to the larger needs of the school. (Gardner, p. 11).

Ethical responses to conflict:

Necessity to the leadership-empowerment cycle is an ethical response to conflict. Within the conflict situation the leader reacts in terms of group ethics and values. Values are at the focal point of the relationship. The values may include community norms, values to be learned by children, ethics to be developed on the way to adulthood, social equality, prudence, honor, honesty, fair play. (Burns, pp. 74; Gardner, 1990, pp. 1-3).

Leaders articulate problems and conflicts; urge ethical perspectives and suggest mutual action. Informal leaders may identify points of conflict and thus assume many effective roles in relating to followers: negotiating with authority figures, articulating causes, motivating others to join in, heightening awareness of issues involving trust, roles and identity. (Burns, pp. 39-45).

People who are informal leaders may not even think of themselves as leaders. All the same, these people are influential in forming group opinions, taking initiatives in group communications, intuitively anticipating group responses, then articulating group responses and feelings, empowering others to do

things they hadn't done before, coalescing group opinion and gathering individuals and other groups together to assert collaborative group action (Burns, pp. 61-74).

The Leadership-Empowerment Cycle incorporates conflict, ethical perspective, and leadership initiatives provided by the leader. Leadership has an ethical basis that is tied to the response to conflict. It is the point at which leader and followers become engaged together in terms of shared motives, values and goals. Leadership draws a gathering of constituencies to the conflict to focus energy on problems of adaptation and change, race, gender, religion, economic inequalities, communities, kinship groups. Leadership tackles competition and conflict bringing people together to make choices and solve problems. To the contrary, bureaucratic power denies there is a problem to deal with and makes new rules to cover up issues and problems (Burns, p. 35-7; 307).

Conflict to some degree in human affairs is to be assumed, tension and anxiety is inevitable, but realizing common bonds and aspirations is critical to relationships between leaders and followers Leadership has an ethical basis in that leaders and followers become engaged together in terms of shared motives values and goals. Given choices in numerous situations, real leadership assumes competition and conflict. The potential for conflict permeates all human relations as mould together our individual personalities and impulses to work together. There is constant change, economic scarcity, competition for scarce

resources and personality conflicts make flawless human relations impossible. (Burns, 1978, pp. 36, 38, 307).

In view of the potential for teacher leadership, it is important to empirically validate the existence of these activities among teachers. In accordance with demonstrating teacher leadership a questionnaire was developed. The results of this empirical validation are presented in a companion paper.

Implications for Educational Leaders:

Implications for the study include the work of career teachers and school administrators, the conceptual framework of teacher leadership and recommendations for further research. Clearly leadership as an informal attribute is very much an aspect of what teachers do. Within these data we observed teachers who are intensively involved in helping people, actively involved with each other, leading newer teachers into the work of teaching. Informal leadership and influence is being formalized in restructuring schools, teacher roles and site-based management.

Implications for school administrators are in developing added cooperative influence by working with informal leaders, by developing improved communications and decision making, and by articulating formal school leadership with informal leaders in schools. Efforts at site-based management and restructuring schools will ultimately improve cooperative work toward the instructional leadership in schools. This may be accomplished by coordinating informal interpersonal issues with the formal leadership of schools and with school leadership committees.

The existence of teacher leadership is probably as elusive as leadership itself (Shieve, 1987). It exists in the complex interactions of people. It is a mistake to assume that school administrators are the singular leaders of their schools. There is much to coordinate in motivating people to work together. The influence of consensus opinions expressed in the faculty room can have an impact on decisions made in the principals office.

Clearly there are many advantages to be derived from working with more talented and mature teachers in mentoring leadership skills involved in full-participation in policy development, articulating curriculum change and instructional improvements. The areas identified suggest areas for skill development which may be included in a new area of graduate coursework after teachers become established in their work and before they become school administrators. The leader of professional people must be skillful in dealing with interpersonal issues. Such leaders must develop and involve participation of subordinate participants and leaders (Bass, 1990, pp. 116, 346-50, 516-20, 665).

Implications for further study include the need to discover teacher leadership skills in a broadly based sampling of teachers who are teacher mentors, school leadership committee members, site-based management committee members, more experienced teachers, teacher trainers, administrative interns, department chair-persons, union representatives, specialized subject area teachers, band directors and athletic directors. Maturational

issues may also be related to sophistication of leadership skills possessed by teachers.

The importance of initiative and participation in the first factor suggests that teacher involvement in informal decision making is a reality of the present time. By implication there is some indication that this occurs even in situations where site-based management has not yet been implemented. Since Site-based management is at its beginning stage, it is likely that teachers responding to the questionnaire have a deep understanding of school decision making that occurs in informal ways, in conversations with the principal, in the faculty room consensus building activities, in the hallways of the school and isolated from school administrators in the parking lot after school.

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